

REMARKS

This application has been reviewed in light of the Office Action dated October 4, 2005. Claims 1-11, 16-26, 31, and 36 are presented for examination. Claims 1, 6, 11, 16, 26, and 31 have been amended to define more clearly what Applicant regards as his invention. Claims 1, 6, 11, 16, 21, 26, 31 and 36 are independent. Favorable reconsideration is requested.

Claims 1 and 16 were objected to under 37 C.F.R. § 1.75(a), as failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which the Applicant regards as his invention or discovery.

The claims have been carefully reviewed and amended as deemed necessary to ensure that they conform fully to the requirements of 37 C.F.R. § 1.75(a), with special attention to the points raised in paragraph 3 of the Office Action.

For example, Claims 1 and 16 have been amended to recite that a determination is made as to whether the user is to be permitted to use the image processing apparatus in conjunction with the different image processing apparatus to perform the first and second operating instructions of the image processing service.

It is believed that the objection under 37 C.F.R. § 1.75(a) has been obviated, and its withdrawal is therefore respectfully requested.

Claims 1-11, 16-26, 31, and 36 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as

being obvious from U.S. Patent 6,567,178 (Tashima) in view of U.S. Patent 5,771,101 (Bramall).

The present invention is directed to an image processing apparatus that performs a first operating instruction for the image processing apparatus and transmits, after a first authentication process, a second operating instruction to a different image processing apparatus. The first operating instruction is performed by the image processing apparatus, and the second operating instruction is performed by the different image processing apparatus after the first operating instruction and a second authentication process are performed.

The present invention is especially useful in cases where image data obtained by scanning an original document at a first image processing apparatus is printed at a second image processing apparatus, for example¹.

Claim 1 is directed to an image processing apparatus that performs an image processing service provided by a first operating instruction about image processing and a second operating instruction about image processing for a different image processing apparatus. The image processing apparatus includes registration means, input means, first authentication means, transmission means, second authentication means, and determination means. The registration means registers registration information for a user who is

¹ It is to be understood that the claim scope is not limited by the details of any examples or of any particular embodiments that may be referred to.

authorized to use the image processing apparatus, and the input means enters user information and the first operating instruction for the image processing apparatus. The first authentication means employs the registration information registered by the registration means and the user information entered by the input means to determine whether the first operating instruction is authorized for the user.

The transmission means transmits, based on results obtained by the first authentication means, to the different image processing apparatus, the second operating instruction and the user information entered by the input means. The second authentication means obtains from the different apparatus results of an authentication process, performed for the user information received from the transmission means, to determine whether the second operating instruction is authorized for the user on the different apparatus. The determination means employs the results obtained by the second authentication means to determine whether the user is to be permitted to use the image processing apparatus in conjunction with the different image processing apparatus to perform the first and second operating instructions of the image processing service. The first operating instruction is performed by the image processing apparatus and the second operating instruction is performed by the different image processing apparatus after the first operating instruction is performed.

Notably, in Claim 1, the image processing apparatus performs an

authentication process for user information entered by input means to determine whether a first operating instruction is authorized for the user, and when the user is authenticated, transmits a second operating instruction and the entered user information to a different image processing apparatus for another authentication process. When the user is again authenticated, the image processing apparatus in conjunction with the different image processing apparatus performs the second operating instruction after the first operating instruction is performed.

Tashima, as understood by Applicant, relates to a FAX mail apparatus which receives and temporarily accumulates FAX messages transmitted from a FAX device on a transmitting side and which transmits the FAX message to a destination FAX device in accordance with a predetermined condition. At most, *Tashima* discusses a FAX mail apparatus that receives a password and a subscriber ID from a remote transmission requester FAX and determines whether to execute a FAX transmission based on the received password and subscriber ID.

The Office Action at paragraph 4 concedes that *Tashima* does not disclose the claimed registration means, first authentication means, and transmission means and cites *Bramall* for these features.

Bramall, as understood by Applicant, relates to a security system for data handling to be used in a photocopier, a FAX machine, or a PC or network computer

system, for example. At most, *Bramall* discusses a security audit device (SAD) for a local photocopier. Nothing in *Tashima* and *Bramall*, whether taken either separately or in any permissible combination (if any), would teach or suggest performing an authentication process for entered user information to determine whether a first operating instruction is authorized for the user, and when the user is authenticated, transmitting a second operating instruction and the entered user information to a different image processing apparatus for another authentication process, and when the user is again authenticated, performing the second operating instruction after the first operating instruction is performed.

Accordingly, Claim 1 is believed to be clearly allowable over *Tashima* and *Bramall*, whether taken either separately or in any permissible combination (if any).

Independent Claims 6, 11, 16, 21, 26, 31, and 36 recite features which are similar in many relevant respects to those discussed above with respect to Claim 1 and therefore are also believed to be patentable over the cited references for at least the reasons discussed above.

A review of the other art of record has failed to reveal anything which, in Applicant's opinion, would remedy the deficiencies of the art discussed above, as references against the independent claims herein. Those claims are therefore believed patentable over the art of record.

The other rejected claims in this application depend from one or another of the independent claims discussed above and, therefore, are submitted to be patentable for at least the same reasons. Since each dependent claim is also deemed to define an additional aspect of the invention, individual reconsideration of the patentability of each claim on its own merits is respectfully requested.

In view of the foregoing amendments and remarks, Applicant respectfully requests favorable reconsideration and early passage to issue of the present application.

Applicant's undersigned attorney may be reached in our New York Office by telephone at (212) 218-2100. All correspondence should continue to be directed to our address listed below.

Respectfully submitted,



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